

February 23, 2022

**Testimony Regarding HB 5037 - Dental Reimbursement Rates**

Angelica Baca, Rocky Hill, CT

Senators Kushner, Cicarella, Osten, Hartley, and Miner, Representatives Abercrombie, Betts, Walker, Dathan, Nolan, and France, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Angelica Baca and I am a registered voter in Rocky Hill, CT.

I am testifying in my role as a certified dental assistant, and dental hygiene student.

The proposed increased reimbursement rates for adults seeking dental treatment on HUSKY are greatly appreciated, especially the proposed endodontic rate matching the children's rate. However, we are concerned the 25% increase is too small to increase provider participation. **In order to increase provider participation in Medicaid, adult dental reimbursement rates need to be increased to parity with the child rates.**

I have been working in the dental field for ten years, and I have witness first-hand how difficult it is for dental practices to sustain themselves when accepting HUSKY dental insurance. In fact, the adult dental Medicaid rates are so low, dentists receive 37 cents on the dollar compared to average insurance. And the dental Medicaid rates have not been increased in 14 years. I have also known many individuals on dental Medicaid that can't find adequate dental care. 2 out of 3 adults on HUSKY do not access dental care, many because they cannot find a dentist. This cause inflation of dental related emergency room visits. Access to comprehensive adult services has potential to reduce financial burden for patients and emergency rooms having to see patients experiencing dental-related pain.

I urge you to increase the adult Medicaid reimbursement rates to bring them to parity with the child Medicaid rates. This will allow family dental practices to accept Medicaid patients of all ages, expanding the network and improving access to care.

We look forward to continuing this conversation about how we can best provide comprehensive dental care to Connecticut's low-income residents. Thank you for your time and for supporting access to care in Connecticut.

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